

## **Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme**

### **1. Credit**

#### **(i) *Credit Weighting***

In accordance with the Modular Initial Degree Regulations, a single modular unit of study is weighted at 10 credits and a year of full-time study is weighted at 120 credits for Honours and General degrees and at 100 for Ordinary degrees.

For Modular Postgraduate Schemes a year of full-time study is weighted at 180 credits.

#### **(ii) *Notional Hours***

1 credit equates to 10 notional hours of student learning which includes contact time, directed and independent study, and assessment.

On this basis, a full-time Honours student would accumulate 120 credits within a 1200-hour academic year and a full-time taught Master's Student 180 credits within an 1800-hour academic year.

A specification of 1 credit equating to 10 notional hours of learning enables articulation between the two credit systems in further and higher education. The above specifications also bring the University CAT Scheme into line with the credit framework proposed by the Higher Education Credit Initiative Wales (HECIW)

#### **(iii) *General and Specific Credit***

*General credit* is the total amount of credit a student possesses by virtue of his/her prior learning. *Specific credit* is that proportion of the total credit possessed by a student which is accepted by an admitting Institution as being directly relevant to the qualification for which the student is being admitted.

In terms of credit transfer, all the general credits possessed by a student are eligible for consideration.

The identification of specific as opposed to general credits will be at the discretion of the admitting Institution in accordance with the provisions of the University CAT Scheme.

## **2. Level of Modular Unit of Study**

In accordance with the Modular Initial Degree Regulations, a level is assigned to a unit of study as a means of defining the position which it occupies in the curriculum or degree scheme. It will therefore be determined by consideration of the award to which a particular scheme is leading and any prior learning required by the student taking the unit. On this basis, a unit of study may be designated at different levels in different schemes of study. (Learning outcomes will be indicative of and appropriate to the level concerned).

### **(A) Undergraduate**

Levels are defined in the Modular Initial Degree Regulations as follows :

Level 0 Units studied in the preliminary/foundation year leading to entry to an initial degree scheme. Units at this Level shall not contribute to the final degree award.

Level 1 Units typically studied in the first year of a full-time degree scheme or the equivalent. Units at this Level shall contribute only exceptionally to the final degree award.

Level 2 Units typically studied in the second year of a full-time degree scheme or the equivalent. Units at this level may contribute to the final degree award.

Level 3 Units typically studied in the third and/or final year of a standard full-time degree scheme or the equivalent. The units should be at a level appropriate to the award of an initial degree, at the Honours level where appropriate.

Level 4 Units typically studied in the fourth and/or final year of an extended full-time degree scheme or the equivalent. The units should be at a level appropriate to the award of an initial degree, at the Honours level where appropriate.

(Level Descriptors, as drafted by HECIW, have been circulated to institutions as a guide in formulating more detailed definitions of the levels of study involved at all stages of an undergraduate programme).

### **(B) Postgraduate**

For modular Taught Master's schemes, it is recommended that a minimum of two thirds of the taught component be studied at M Level. Such units should normally require pre-requisite knowledge and skills which are of initial degree level or its equivalent.

A Level M descriptor, as drafted by HECIW, has been circulated to institutions as a guide in formulating a more detailed definition of this module type.

### **3. Credit Accumulation Structure**

#### **(i) *General Principles***

The University CAT Scheme provides for the award of the qualifications set out below by the accumulation of credit points. Undergraduate and postgraduate schemes of study, with staged progression from lower to higher qualifications, may be constructed on the basis of this framework. The credit points required for the award of these qualifications may be accumulated through the satisfactory completion of the relevant schemes of study, or part thereof as appropriate.

#### *(A) Undergraduate*

Certificate of Higher Education  
Diploma of Higher Education  
Initial Degree

#### *(B) Postgraduate*

Postgraduate Certificate  
Postgraduate Diploma  
Master's Degree

The staged-award structure is not compulsory for all undergraduate and postgraduate schemes of study. Institutions may adopt various approaches. For example, a Master's degree scheme could lead to the Master's qualification only, or the Postgraduate Diploma and Master's, or all three postgraduate qualifications.

Students who leave a scheme of study with or without an exit-point qualification may, at the discretion of the institution, be permitted to re-enter the scheme at the appropriate point provided that they have not previously attempted and failed the higher qualification after exhausting all rights of retrieval and subject to the time limits for the completion of the scheme of study.

The Certificate and Diploma, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, can also be used as qualification aims in their own right. All such awards, as well as the final degree qualifications, will be made by the University.

**(ii) Structures**

*A. Undergraduate*

The following structure is based on the Modular Initial Degree Regulations requiring students to pursue credits as follows:-

<u>Credit and Level</u>	<u>Qualification</u>	<u>Full-time study equivalent</u>
not less than 120 credits at Level 1	Certificate of Higher Education	Year 1 of full-time Initial Degree
not less than 240 credits, incl. at least 120 at Level 2	Diploma of Higher Education	Year 2 of full-time Initial degree
not less than 300 credits, incl. at least 60 at Level 3	Degree (Ordinary)	Year 3 of full-time Initial degree
not less than 360 credits, incl. at least 120 at Level 3	Degree (Honours and General)	Year 3 of full-time Initial degree

(Initial degrees may contain credits at Level 4 as specified in the Modular Initial Degree Regulations)

The time limits for completion of an initial degree, including any exit-point qualifications, as set out in the Modular Initial Degree Regulations, are :

(excluding any preliminary/foundation year)

*Full-time mode*

3-year scheme : not more than 5 years from the start of the scheme

4-year scheme : not more than 6 years from the start of the scheme

*Other modes of study*

not less than 4 and not more than 10 years from the start of the scheme.

*B. Postgraduate*

The following structure is based on the Regulations for Modular Master's Degrees which require students to pursue credits as follows:-

<i>Credits</i>	<i>Qualification</i>
not less than 60	Postgraduate Certificate

not less than 120                      Postgraduate Diploma

not less than 180 at least 60    Master's degree  
of which is the dissertation

In accordance with University Regulations, within a Master's degree scheme, the Postgraduate Diploma (incorporating a Postgraduate Certificate as appropriate) is the taught element with the dissertation being the Master's stage.

The time limits for completion of a Master's degree scheme, including any exit-point qualifications, as set out in the Regulations for Modular Master's Degrees, are:

*Full-time candidates  
on 1-year schemes*

*Full-time candidates  
on 2-year schemes*

*Part-time candidates*

not less than 12 months  
not more than 2 years

not less than 24 months  
not more than 3 years

not less than 24 months  
not more than 5 years

#### **4. Assessment**

Assessment and award of qualifications will be in accordance with provisions in :

- the relevant University Regulations;
- institutions' own conventions; and
- regulations of the particular scheme of study.

##### **(A) Undergraduate**

Students may be graded on a variety of scales. To ensure comparability in the measurement of students' relative success in achieving their credits and to facilitate accreditation of prior study both within and outside the University, the following table is suggested as a general conversion scale for undergraduate awards.

<i>Grade Points</i>	<i>Scale</i>	<i>Percentages<sup>9</sup></i>	<i>Degree Result</i>
16	5(A)	≥80	First Class Honours
15		≥77 <80	
14		≥74 <77	
13		≥70 <74	
12	4(B)	≥67 <70	Upper Second Class Honours
11		≥64 <67	
10		≥60 <64	
9	3(C)	≥57 <60	Lower Second Class Honours
8		≥54 <57	
7		≥50 <54	
6	2(D)	≥47 <50	Third Class Honours
5		≥44 <47	
4		≥40 <44	
3	1(E) Pass Degree	≥35 <40	Pass Degree
2			
1	0(F)	≥30 <35	Fail
		<30	

<sup>9</sup> ≥ = at or above  
< = below

Notwithstanding the grade point provision, it is recommended that assessment and classification of awards should be percentage-based, to take account of the single University percentage-banded classification scale for modular Honours degrees.

### **(B) Postgraduate**

There is currently no University grading scale for postgraduate awards. The term 'Distinction' is used to mark excellent performance by candidates for Master's degrees and is set at 70% or above. The University's Working Group on Modularisation and Semesterisation has recommended a minimum module pass mark of 40% for the award of credit at Postgraduate Diploma level, with an overall average of at least 50% in order to proceed to the dissertation stage. The matter remains under discussion.

## 5. Awards

Normally, the lower qualification (of certificate or diploma) should not be awarded automatically to students who fulfil the requirements for that qualification irrespective of whether or not they proceed directly to the next stage of the scheme, ie as 'intermediate awards', but only to those qualified students who :

- leave while part way through the scheme (exit-point awards); or
- have completed the scheme but failed the higher qualification (fall-back awards).

Where more than one qualification is awarded, the final (terminal) certificate document should be endorsed to indicate that the higher level award incorporates any intermediate or exit-point qualification which might previously have been awarded. Implicit in this decision is the assumption that certificates would be issued for intermediate/exit-point qualifications.

## 6. Credit Transfer

### (i) *Conditions for Accreditation*

The following rules relate to the assessment of prior learning for credit :

- credit may be assessed on the basis of prior study, prior experiential learning and work-based learning;
- units of prior study may be accepted in part in the case of successfully completed modules of which only a proportion is deemed relevant by the admitting institution;
- the level at which credit is accepted is to be determined by the admitting institution. Thus Level 3 prior study may be accredited at Level 2 only;
- the student's level of performance (in terms of grade/marks) in the transferred-in credits is accepted and, where appropriate, counts as contributing towards the award;
- credits are transferred in units of not less than 5;
- the question of whether or not the accrued credits for prior study remain valid in relation to the scheme of study to which the student is being admitted is a matter for the admitting Institution to determine, subject to the overall time limits for completion of schemes of study;
- credits already counted towards an undergraduate qualification are not allowed to count towards a postgraduate qualification.

## **(ii) *Transfer Limits***

### **A. *Undergraduate***

In accordance with the Modular Initial Degree Regulations, the limits are:

#### *Honours, General and Ordinary Degrees*

A maximum of 240 relevant credits; where the maximum transferable credit allowed has been accepted, the remaining credits to be pursued at the admitting Institution should normally be at Level 3 or above.

#### *Certificates and Diplomas*

Certificate	80 credits
Diploma	160 credits

(where the maximum transferable credit allowed has been accepted, the remaining credits to be pursued at the admitting Institution should normally be at Level 2 or above).

### **B. *Postgraduate***

In accordance with the Regulations for Modular Master's Degrees, the limits are :

Postgraduate Certificate	30 credits
Postgraduate Diploma	60 credits
Master's degree	120 credits

Admission with academic credit should be subject to the same principles as admission to the beginning of a scheme of study and is governed by University/Institution scheme entry requirements, as appropriate.

Where applicants with a particular qualification are to be admitted regularly with a standard amount of credit, such arrangements should be formalised in the regulations for the scheme concerned. For undergraduate schemes, the arrangements will be approved by the Institution concerned in accordance with the University's Regulations. This will also be the case for postgraduate schemes within overall limits stipulated by University Regulations.